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A STUDY ON STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE GENERATION GAP

by

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A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "A Study on Student Perceptions of the Generation Gap" submitted by Kenneth Robert Vandenberg in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine perceptions of students regarding the generation gap. An attempt was made to identify some of the factors in the parent-child relationship which may be related to the generation gap. The study was also intended to examine differences in student perceptions of the generation gap in terms of the following variables: age, sex, religious affiliation, family background, community background, socio-economic status, value orientations, and the employment status of the student's mother.

Usable data were obtained from 480 students in grades ten and twelve in urban and rural centres in Alberta. Examination of the data revealed that approximately one-quarter of the respondents felt that a generation gap always or often existed between themselves and their parents. In contrast, nearly one-half of the respondents felt that a generation gap always or often existed for other members of their generation. The difference between students' perceptions of a personal generation gap and their perceptions of a generation gap for others was found to be statistically significant.

It was found that the presence of a perceived personal generation gap is related to a perceived break in intergenerational communication, a perceived lack of intergenerational interaction, a perceived degree of intergenerational distrust, and perceived differences in views and opinions with regard to politics, religion

and morality.

The findings of the study also revealed that, with two exceptions, no statistically significant differences in student perceptions of a personal generation gap, or a generation gap for others, were found when the students were compared on the basis of age, sex, religious affiliation, family background, community background, socio-economic status, and the employment status of the student's mother. Exceptions to these results included the finding that males perceived a generation gap for others to a significantly greater degree than females, and the finding that students who had no religious affiliation perceived a personal generation gap to a significantly greater degree than did students of Protestant religious affiliation.

No significant differences in traditional or emergent value orientations were found when students were grouped according to their perceptions of a personal generation gap. Nor were significant differences found in emergent value orientations when students were grouped on the basis of their perceptions of a generation gap for others. A statistically significant F ratio was obtained for differences in the mean scores for traditional value orientations when students were grouped according to their perceptions of a generation gap for others. However, no significant differences were found between any pair of means when the Scheffé multiple comparison of means test was applied.

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Chapter 1

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Several writers have supported the idea that there is a distinct set of social differences between youth and the older generation. Mead (1969:135), for example, has suggested that the young are by definition separated from their elders, and that today, members of the older generation are immigrants in time living in an age substantially different from anything they have previously experienced.

Although a great deal has been said and written about the generation gap, relatively little empirical research has been carried out. This study was intended to examine the position of the younger generation with regard to the issue of the generation gap.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Problem

The main purpose of this study was to examine perceptions of students regarding a generation gap. This study was designed to investigate the degree to which students perceive a generation gap between themselves and their parents, and between their generation and their parents' generation. Further, this study has attempted to discover some of the factors in the parent-child relationship which may be related to the generation gap. In addition, it was the intent of this study to examine differences in student perceptions of the generation gap in terms of the following variables: age, sex, religious affiliation, family background, community background, socio-economic status, value orientations, and the employment status of the student's mother.

Sub-Problems

1. To what degree do students perceive a generation gap between themselves and their parents?

2. To what degree do students perceive a generation gap between their generation and their parents' generation?

3. To what degree does a relationship exist between perceptions of students regarding intergenerational communication and their perceptions of a personal generation gap?

4. To what degree does a relationship exist between perceptions of students regarding intergenerational participation and interaction and their perceptions of a personal generation gap?

5. To what degree does a relationship exist between perceptions of students regarding intergenerational trust and their perceptions of a personal generation gap?

6. To what degree does a relationship exist between perceptions of students regarding differences in political views and their perceptions of a personal generation gap?

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15. Are there significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared on the basis of value orientations?

16. Are there significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared on the basis of the employment status of the student's mother?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

One of the problems faced by some youth today is the generation gap, a phenomenon characterized in whole or in part by a break in effective intergenerational communication, an absence of meaningful participation and interaction involving both generations, and a degree of mutual distrust between parents and their children. Any differences in the values, attitudes and beliefs held by parents and those held by their children may also constitute part of what is known as the generation gap.

A greater understanding of the generation gap may help administrators to better understand students. This understanding may be of help in various instances of student-administrator interaction, including, for example, such activities as counselling, or discipline.

The school also has a role to play in developing curriculum programs which take into account the values and opinions of youth, recognizing that these values and opinions may be different from some of those held by the adult generation, and recognizing also that it is generally the value system of the adult generation which underlies present curriculum programs. Knill (1963:36), writing about what he termed the adolescent sub-society, suggested that:

> Once educators are in a position to understand and describe this sub-society, and have some insight into its dynamics, then they will be in a position to capitalize upon its strength for better education.

In the short run, the school may also be able to play a role in lessening the severity of the generation gap by providing opportunities for youth and adults to air their views through such activities as the establishment of discussion groups. In the long run, the school may be able to lessen the impact of the generation gap by educating for the acceptance of change. If people are educated to accept change more easily, then the problems of the generation gap may be significantly reduced.

One generation may find change in the next generation more acceptable as well as being easier to understand and make adjustments to, if schools are able to bring about an acceptance of change by that generation.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Community Background

Community background refers to an individual's area of residence, which, for the purposes of this study, has been categorized as either urban or rural. Rural centres in this study were randomly selected from a list of communities, each of which had a population of less than 5000. Those individuals who had spent the greatest part of their lives in a city, and/or had lived in a city for at least the past five years, were categorized as having an urban community background. Those individuals who had spent the greatest part of their lives living in a town, village, or on a farm, and/or those who had lived in a town, village, or on a farm for at least the past five years, were categorized as having a rural community background.

Family Background

For the purposes of this study family background includes information with regard to the person(s) with whom an individual ordinarily lives, his position within the family, family size, and information with regard to the marital status of the individual's parents.

Generation Gap

The term generation gap is used to imply a separation between members of two generations. No attempt is made here to give a more precise definition; however, the study itself hopefully contributes to a clearer understanding of the term.

Personal generation gap. A personal generation gap refers to personal perceptions of a generation gap between an individual and his own parents.

Generation gap for others. A generation gap for others refers to perceptions of a generation gap between other members of the individual's own generation and the generation of the individual's parents.

Intergenerational Communication

Intergenerational communication refers to the ability to express opinions and feelings to members of another generation.

Intergenerational Participation and Interaction

Intergenerational participation and interaction refers to the presence of mutually enjoyed activities in which both youth and their parents participate.

Intergenerational Trust

Intergenerational trust refers to the presence of trust and confidence between members of two generations.

Religious Affiliation

Religious affiliation refers to an individual's expressed connection or association with a given system of faith or worship. For the purposes of this study, individuals were categorized as being Catholic (including Roman and Ukrainian Catholic), Protestant, Other, or as having no religious affiliation.

Socio-Economic Status

Socio-economic status refers to the different levels assigned to people according to their various social characteristics, but with particular emphasis upon occupation, education, and wealth. For the purposes of this study, socio-economic status was measured by means of a modified form of the Gough Home Index Scale. Students who scored 9 or less on the Gough Scale were categorized as being of "low" socio-economic status. Those who scored 10, 11, or 12 were categorized as being of "middle" socio-economic status, while those who scored 13 or more on the Gough Scale were categorized as being of "high" socio-economic status.

Values

The following definition of values, proposed by Kluckhohn (1959:395) and accepted by several other researchers, is used in this study:

> A value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from the available modes, means and ends of action.

This definition of values gives emphasis to the desirable, that is, what is felt to be the correct course of action for the individual or group to take. This may, of course, be something different from that which is ordinarily practiced.

For the purposes of this study, value orientations are operationally defined as those derived from the raw scores on the revised and adapted Differential Values Inventory (DVI), which was originally developed by Prince (1959) and revised by Friesen of the University of Alberta in 1970. These value orientations are based upon the classification of traditional and emergent values as formulated by Spindler (1955) and Getzels (1957).

Traditional value orientation. A traditional value orientation is characteristic of an individual who emphasizes the work-success ethic, a future-time orientation, personal independence, and rigid discipline, as measured by the revised and adapted DVI.

Emergent value orientation. An emergent value orientation is characteristic of an individual who emphasizes sociability, hedonistic tone, group conformity, and other directed orientation, as measured by the revised and adapted DVI.

ASSUMPTIONS

One of the basic assumptions underlying this study was that it is possible by means of a paper and pencil test to gather information from high school students that is representative of the views and opinions which they actually hold.

It was also assumed that the respondents who participated in this study had the knowledge necessary to complete the instrument, and that the instrument provided a valid and reliable measure of the variables involved in this study.

LIMITATIONS

The study was limited by recognition of the fact that the scope of the study did not examine all possible aspects of the generation gap. The study was limited to perceptions of a generation gap between parents and their children, and between the generation of parents and their children's generation.

Although an attempt was made to ensure that the schools used in this study were representative of urban and rural Alberta, and although an effort was also made to ensure that the students who responded to the questionnaire were representative of grade ten and twelve students in Alberta, it is important to point out that the respondents were not chosen on a random basis, and that caution should be used in generalizing the results of this study to other groups of students.

A further limitation results from the impossibility of eliminating all extraneous variables which may have a bearing upon responses made in completing the instrument. This problem, faced by social science researchers in general, is especially important in the present study since much of the information sought was of a highly subjective nature.

DELIMITATIONS

The sample included only students in selected urban and rural schools in Alberta, who were in grade ten or twelve, and who were present at the time the questionnaire was administered.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

This chapter has introduced the research problem and sub-problems, presented the significance of the study, the definition of important terms, and stated the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the study.

In Chapter 2, a review of the literature related to the study is provided. Chapter 3 presents the methodology of the study, including a description of the instrumentation, the sample, and data collection, treatment and analysis. In Chapter 4, a detailed description of the sample is provided. Chapter 5 presents the analysis of the data. Chapter 6 contains a summary of the study, a statement of the main conclusions and implications arising from the study, and some suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

The generation gap is widely recognized as being an important problem facing our society. However, a survey of both the popular and professional literature indicates that there is little agreement on a precise definition of the term "generation gap." In this regard Mauss and Winston (1971:1) attested that difficulty with the "generation gap" concept occurs at both the theoretical and operational levels, in that at both levels, explicit definitions are lacking, while implicit definitions are ambigious and hard to extract.

In its basic form the generation gap may be considered a function of the long maturation period of human beings. In this sense the generation gap has been with mankind throughout history. Some writers argue that the generation gap which exists today is different only in degree from that which existed in the past. Crawford (1967) asserted that the generation gap has merely been re-discovered. He claimed that constant repetition of the idea that the gap between the young and the old is wider and deeper now than it ever was before, has induced general acceptance of this idea.

Other writers believe that today's generation gap is different not only in degree, but in kind, from that which existed in the past. This difference is generally attributed to rapid technological and social change. Mead (1970:78), referring to the older generation, suggested that no other generation in the past

> . . . has ever known, experienced, and incorporated such rapid changes, watched the sources of power, the means of communication, the definition of humanity, the limits of their explorable universe, the certainties of a known and limited world, the fundamental imperatives of life and death--all change before their eyes.

Realizing this, the older generation must recognize that the young ". . . will never experience what we have experienced, and that we can never experience what they have experienced" (Mead, 1970:79). In this sense, ". . . we must recognize that we have no descendents, as our children have no forebears" (Mead, 1970:78).

Stedman Jones (1969:39) suggested that because of the rapid rate of societal change,

> . . . each new generation travels through a different mental universe en route to adulthood; and the gap between its cultural shell and that of its predecessors is constantly widening.

Davis (1940) saw rapid social change as the single most important cause of parent-adolescent conflict. In this regard, Brawer (1971:2) stated that there is an inverse relationship between the rate of social innovation and rapport between generations. An inverse relationship between social change and intergenerational rapport was also seen by Sebald (1968:53).

A related position was taken by Coleman (1965) who contended that changes in the structure of society have given rise to communication problems between adults and youth. He argued that changes such as the increased number of women in the labor force and the shift toward the nuclear family have combined to make the family less cohesive and less effective as a child-rearing agency. This development, Coleman claimed, is largely responsible for a breakdown in intergenerational communication.

YOUTH CULTURE AND ALIENATION

Just as there is a lack of agreement regarding the concept of the generation gap, there is disagreement about the terms "youth culture" and "alienation," both of which may bear an important relationship to the generation gap concept. Gottlieb (1965:32) reported a survey of social scientists which found that while there was general agreement on the existence of a youth subculture, there were differing opinions on where and how it departs from the total or more universal culture.

In its most general form, the youth culture concept relates to the special tastes of adolescents in such matters as dress, language, music and leisure activity. Parsons (1942:606-607) considered youth culture as being composed of a complex set of behavior patterns which developed at the point of emergence into adolescence. He saw it as a culture involving irresponsibility and flippancy, and suggested that it ". . . shows signs of being a product of tensions in the relationship of younger people and adults" (Parsons, 1942:608).

Weiner (1971:157), while agreeing with the existence of a youth culture, with an idosyncratic terminology, tastes and standards, argued that often the concept is over-generalized to include, on the part of youth, ". . . a search for commitment through allegiance to radical points of view." He stated further that commitment to radical points of view is characteristic of relatively few members of the younger generation. Weiner was particularly critical of such writers as Keniston with regard to the concepts of youth culture and alienation. Yet Keniston readily admitted that in such works as The Uncommitted (1965:392) and Young Radicals (1968:326), he was dealing only with a small segment of the younger generation. Keniston (1965:395) suggested that rather than speaking of one embracing youth sub-culture, it would be more appropriate to speak of many youth sub-cultures which share some common characteristics.

At the same time, Keniston (1965:395) also suggested that the period of youth is a period of socially enforced alienation. On the other hand, Mitchell (1971:57) wrote: "When discussing alienated adolescents, we are not talking about a majority: we are talking about a minority -- probably in the 10 to 20 percent range." It is evident from the work of these and other writers that the concept of alienation has been used and developed in different ways by different people. It is of interest to note that Seeman (1959) identified five alternative meanings of alienation, and within each of these five categories there is a further variation in the use and meaning of the term.

Several writers, in dealing with the problems of youth, have dealt with what they perceive as the alienating effects of present-day society. In The Vanishing Adolescent, Friedenberg (1969:17) contended that fewer and fewer youngsters were going through a real adolescent process of self-definition or self-identification; instead ". . . they merely undergo puberty and simulate maturity." Friedenberg (1959:202) stated that conditions in our society regularly frustrate" . . . the natural processes of emotional development in adolescence." In a more recent work, he appeared to regard conflict between the older generation and youth as a reversal in the trend toward what he had earlier described as ". . . a silent and beat generation" (Friedenberg, 1969:17). Although dealing with only a minority of youth, especially those prone to dissent, he saw such dissent as an ". . . expression of what has become genuine class-conflict between a dominant and exploitive older generation and youth. . . " (Friedenberg, 1969:32). Friedenberg (1969:53) declared that the term "generation gap" is a passive concept developed by ". . . middle-aged liberal ideology, serving to allay anxiety rather than to clarify the bases of intergenerational conflict." He also contended that while the notion of the generation gap is adequate to describe ". . . the barrier that separates many young people from their elders . . . ," it does in fact reflect ". . . a false view of what is actually a profound conflict of interest in our society."

A similar view regarding a minority segment of the younger generation was developed by such writers as Goodman (1956) and Bloy (1969). In Growing Up Absurd Goodman (1956) stated that the disaffected minority in society is often viewed as the product of a failure in the socialization process; a failure in communication of society's message to the young. Goodman (1956:11) argued that this view may not be correct; instead, he stated, ". . . perhaps there has not been a failure of communication. Perhaps the social message has been communicated clearly to the young men and is unacceptable."

A related position was taken by Bloy (1969:357) who suggested that in order to understand the counter-culture of alienated youth, it is necessary to examine not just the alienated, ". . . but also the alienator, the agency or system which may well be in deeper need of therapy and the more appropriate object of such."

While these writers deal specifically with minorities within the younger generation, others suggest that the entire younger generation may be viewed as a minority group. Kvaraceus (1963) maintained that for youth in all social classes, there exists alienation from both self and society, and that youth are an exploited and disenfranchised minority group. Kelly (1969) agreed that there are several pertinent characteristics of minority groups which can be applied to adolescents.

ADOLESCENCE AS A STAGE IN LIFE

It is of interest to note here that the concept of youth as a stage in life is relatively new. Van den Berg (1961) pointed out that until the eighteenth century, a child was simply considered to be a small adult. The child was not thought of as a child in present-day terms until the Industrial Revolution transformed the family as an economic unit. Prior to this time the child was expected to assume such adult tasks as he was large enough to do.

According to Shapiro (1969:16), the word "adolescence" doesn't make its appearance in the literature until 1835, and until the latter part of the nineteenth century, ". . . studies of adolescence are almost exclusively studies of physical growth -- the measurement of limbs and organs as a means of determining adulthood." It was not until the twentieth century that "adolescence" began to be regarded as a psychological state, a stage in life between childhood and adulthood.

Sebald (1968:11) referred to adolescence in the social-psychological sense as ". . . the experience of passing through the unstructured and ill-defined phase that lies between childhood and adulthood." This definition of adolescence is clearly related to the position taken by Munns (1971:198), who contended that the major reason for conflict between the young and the old lies in the adolescent's state of mental development and his lack of a highly differentiated value system. A virtually identical view is held by Weiner (1971:155) who stated that the normal adolescent process of identity formation is a major ingredient in the generation gap.

VALUES AND THE GENERATION GAP

Several writers have suggested that the generation gap can be best understood in terms of differences in the values held by youth and older people. Halleck (1968), for example, claimed that value differences are the most important cause of the generation gap and that the two sides of the generation gap see each other as being guided by opposite values. Similar ideas regarding value differences as an issue central to the generation gap were held by such writers as Konopla (1969) and Brawer (1971). Sebald (1968:53) suggested that intergenerational conflict is marked by conflicting norms, goals, and behavioral patterns.

Although few empirical studies of the generation gap itself have been conducted, it would appear that some very worth-while guidance for research may be found in the research literature on student values.

Cathcart (1967) investigated some of the values held by high school students and their teachers. He examined student values as measured by the Differential Values Inventory in relation to such variables as age, sex, family size, grade level, socio-economic status, employment status of the student's mother and church membership. Cathcart found that students were more achievement oriented than teachers, and teachers were more independent than students. In examining the values of students, he established that students who were older, students from larger families, students in higher grades, and students who were church members tended to be more traditional in their value orientations. Cathcart also determined that students whose mothers were working outside the home did not score significantly different on the Differential Values Inventory from students whose mothers were not working outside the home. He found no major differences in values on the basis of sex, although each sex scored significantly higher than the other sex on one of the traditional and one of the emergent scales. Cathcart (1967:154) did not find significant differences in values on the basis of socio-economic status, a finding which, as he has suggested, ". . . is contrary to the results of much previous research in the relationship between social class and attitudes and values."

Clark (1969) examined the values of three Canadian youth sub-cultures. He found value differences among student groups of the Jewish, Protestant, and Roman Catholic faiths, which he stated, ". . . can probably be attributed to differences in cultural background" (Clark, 1969:v).

In a study of values held by rural students, Lavers (1970) found that there were no significant differences between the values held by teachers and those held by their students. Lavers, who measured student and teacher values by means of the Differential Values Inventory, also reported that he found no significant differences between the value orientations of males and females. Further, the socio-economic status of students as measured by the Gough Home Index Scale was found to be unrelated to the values of students as measured by the DVI.

In another study, Anderson (1972) investigated the value orientations of high school students in rural Alberta. As well as studying the values of rural youth as a group, Anderson also studied the value orientations of various sub-groups, as defined by sex, socio-economic status, ethnicity, place of residence, community, academic achievement and grade in school. The results of the study indicated that although ". . . intracultural value variations exist in the rural adolescent population studied, these differences are not pronounced" (Anderson, 1972:91). Anderson claimed that the findings of her study indicated that rural students have assimilated those value orientations which are accepted by society in general.

In contrast to Anderson's findings for a rural student population is a contention made by Marsh regarding the rural adult population. Marsh (1970:60) contended that the rural person who migrates to an urban, industrial center for employment is threatened by very real value conflicts and role conflicts.

Bealer and Willits (1961:64) stated that although the rural community no longer exists as a geographically isolated unit, ". . . this does not mean that rural and urban are one." Reporting on a study of some 8000 Pennsylvania youth, Bealer and Willits (1961:64) stated that ". . . the traditional values of farm youth have changed less, proportionately, than the values of non-farm youth." Bealer and Willits suggested that just as American culture does not represent a single pattern of values and behavior, it seems likely that the adolescent subculture is not entirely homogeneous. The authors (Bealer and Willits, 1961:69) also suggested that it may be more accurate to speak of many youth sub-cultures, and they contended that the place of residence, that is, rural versus urban residence, is one factor which fosters diversity within the youth culture.

RESEARCH STUDIES ON THE GENERATION GAP

As mentioned earlier, relatively little empirical work has been attempted with regard to the generation gap problem. Five studies which have been carried out on the topic are dealt with below.

One such study took the form of a survey conducted by the Scholastic Research Center for *Scholastic Teacher* (1969), in which 1000 students, 500 of each sex, were asked whether or not they felt there was a generation gap with regard to the following three areas: 1) *Outlook on Life*, 2) *Trust*, 3) *Understanding*. Results from the survey indicated that 72.1 percent of those surveyed perceived a moderate or great gap with regard to *Outlook on Life*; 61.7 percent perceived a moderate or great gap with regard to *Trust*; and 78.8 percent perceived a moderate or great gap with regard to *Understanding*.

Herzog and Sudia (1970) report a study conducted for the Children's Bureau of the United States Office of Child Development, which surveyed the views of 251 high school students in 12 American cities. This study found that one-half of those surveyed viewed the generation gap as a real problem. The students surveyed most often indicated that they saw the problem as a gap in understanding or communication. Many of the respondents also referred to value clashes between the generations.

Mauss and Winston (1971) report a study which used an index of identification with adult authority figures as an operational definition of the generation gap. The generation gap was defined as the extent to which high school students failed to identify with significant adult others including parents, teachers, principals and other school administrators, and policemen. The study found that a higher socio-economic status level, a higher degree of identification with the ideal of deferral gratification, and a higher rate of success in school as measured by grades, were all related to a higher degree of adult identification. Religion was also found to be a factor -- Jews proved to be most likely to identify with adult authorities, while the unchurched and the liberal Protestants were least likely to do so. Age and sex were not found to make any significant differences in identification with adult authorities.

Meisels and Cantor (1971) report a study of the generation gap which involved 255 introductory psychology students at Eastern Michigan University. The students completed an attitude questionnaire which asked them to rate their own feelings, those of their parents, and those of their peers along a five-point scale with regard to attitudes toward a variety of contemporary issues. The 16-item questionnaire dealt with attitudes toward such issues as the war in Vietnam, the legalization of marijuana, and the value of modern art. Using one-way analysis of variance and the Newman-Keuls test, Meisels and Cantor found that there were statistically significant differences between perceived parental and perceived peer attitudes for 14 of the 16 items. They also found significant differences between the students' own rating and that perceived for their parents for 12 of the 16 items. Further, student values were significantly different from perceived peer values for 10 of the 16 items. Meisels and Cantor suggested that students are apparently influenced by current propaganda on the generation gap. They contended that the results which showed significant differences between the students' own values and those of their peers, can best be accounted for by the explanation that the students subscribe ". . . to the widely publicized notion of a generation gap so that, in their imagination, the younger generation is liberal and progressive while the parent generation is conservative and establishment" (Meisels and Cantor, 1971:529).

Boshier and Taylor (1972) report a generation gap study recently carried out in New Zealand. The sample in this study consisted of 76 students between the ages of 17 and 19, along with the parents of these students. In the study use was made of a 50-item scale designed to measure attitudes toward various social issues. Boshier and Taylor found that parents were significantly more conservative than their children on 25 of the items, whereas children were significantly more conservative than their parents on only 2 items. At the same time, it was found that children significantly over-estimated the degree of conservatism of both their mothers and fathers. Further, both girls and boys were unable to pin-point accurately, differences between the attitudes held by their mothers and their fathers.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

Rosenhaupt (1970:256) suggested that ". . . today an academic doesn't feel respectable until he has made a speech or written his prolegomena or what have you concerning the generation gap." While much has been written about the problem of the generation gap, relatively little empirical research has been carried out.

From a review of the literature it appears that the concepts of "youth culture" and "alienation," as these terms have been used and developed by various writers, are of little aid in arriving at a clear conception of the "generation gap." The term "generation gap" itself remains ill-defined, and there is widespread disagreement as to the causes and even the significance of this phenomenon.

The need for a study to further examine the position of the younger generation on the issue of the generation gap appears to be evident. There is not only a need to examine student perceptions of a generation gap between themselves and their parents, or their generation and their parents' generation, but also a need to arrive at a clearer understanding of the generation gap concept held by the younger generation.

Further, the review of the literature dealt with above also suggests that differences in student perceptions of the generation gap could be examined in terms of a number of variables including age, sex, religious affiliation, family background, community background, socio-economic status, value orientations, and the employment status of the student's mother.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents a description of the instrument used for data collection, and outlines the procedure used for the collection of data and the methodology applied in the study.

INSTRUMENTATION

The instrument used in collecting the data was designed especially for this investigation. The data were collected by means of a four-part questionnaire, a copy of which may be found in Appendix B.

The first part of the questionnaire was designed to provide basic demographic and socio-economic data. Among these were sex, age, grade level, religious affiliation, community background, family size, the individual's position within the family, the marital status of the individual's parents, the person(s) with whom the individual ordinarily resides, and the employment status of the individual's mother. Socio-economic data were obtained by means of a modified form of the Gough Home Index Scale.

The original form of the Home Index Scale was developed by Gough (1949) on the assumption that socio-economic status could best be measured by a combination of indices. The test-retest reliability coefficient of Gough's scale was 0.989 when used on a sample of 55 college students (Gough, 1949:54). Using a sample of 252 high school students, Gough calculated a Kuder-Richardson coefficient of 0.74 as a measure of internal consistency.

Elley (1961:105) modified the original Gough scale to make it more applicable to Canadian usage. His modified scale showed a split-half reliability coefficient of 0.77 and a correlation of 0.61 with Blishen's Occupational Class Scale.

Further minor modifications have since been incorporated to update the scale. A question relating to the ownership of a hi-fi or record player was changed so as to ask about the ownership of a stereo record player. A second question, relating to the father's membership in clubs and organizations, was deleted and replaced by a question which dealt with the ownership of a color television set. Overall, the scale contained twenty questions related to the education of parents, property ownership, and social and recreational life style. Benoit (1967), Cathcart (1967), Clark (1969), Lavers (1970), MacLeod (1971) and Johnson (1972) used this scale in studies conducted at the University of Alberta involving high school students.

In the present study, four additional modifications were made to the Gough scale. In two questions relating to the education of parents, the word "senior" was used to modify the term "high school"; in a third question, relating to the number of books owned by the family, the modifier "hard cover" was deleted; and in a fourth question, relating to holidays taken by the family, the words "your community" were substituted for the word "town." The scale used in this study appears as questions 11 through 30 in the first part of the questionnaire.

The second part of the questionnaire was designed to obtain data regarding perceptions of the parent-child relationship. Responses were to be selected from a five-part scale ranging from "always" to "never." Respondents were asked to answer six questions relating to intergenerational communication, mutually enjoyed activities, intergenerational trust, and similarity of views and opinions on politics, religion, and morality.

Part three of the questionnaire consisted of a Differential Values Inventory (DVI) adapted by Friesen of the University of Alberta. The original DVI was devised by Prince (1957) on the basis of theory and classification formulated by Spindler (1955) and Getzels (1957). Other adapted versions of the Prince DVI were used by Lupini (1965), Cathcart (1967), and Walter (1971) in studies conducted at the University of Alberta.

The present study made use of the DVI revised by Friesen in 1970, and used by Barker (1972) and Johnson (1972) at the University of Alberta. This DVI is comprised of thirty-seven Likert-type items designed to determine the values held by high school students. These items represent eight categories related to the traditional and emergent conceptualization of Getzels and Spindler. The eight value categories are shown at the top of page 29.

Traditional	Emergent
1. Work-success ethic	1. Sociability
2. Future-time orientation	2. Hedonistic tone
3. Personal independence	3. Group conformity
4. Rigid discipline	4. Other directed

Scores of from one to five were assigned for responses to each item, depending upon the degree of agreement with the statement. As outlined by Barker (1972:35), items which produced Varimax loadings of less than .400 were discarded. The twenty-nine items which produced above .400 loadings on the Varimax Rotated Factors on the eight subscales are represented in Table 1. The factor analysis of all thirty-seven items on an eight factor loading is presented in Appendix C. Scores on items with negative loadings were reflected so that they could be correctly related to other items on the scale.

In the present study, scores on the four traditional and four emergent subscales were added so that an orientation score for each respondent could be obtained on the traditional and emergent scales. Scores on each of these scales were then examined in relation to students' perceptions of the generation gap.

The fourth and final part of the questionnaire consisted of two questions which required respondents to indicate the degree to which they felt a generation gap existed between themselves and their parents, and between their generation and their parents' generation.

Table 1

Significant Varimax Factor Analysis Loadings on the Eight Value Subscales

Traditional

Subscales	Items	Communalities	Loadings
Work-success ethic	6	0.407	0.535
	13	0.534	0.673
	27	0.555	0.446
	34	0.531	0.616
	37	0.568	0.501
Future-time orientation	1	0.568	0.513
	8	0.741	0.811
	15	0.692	0.756
	29	0.640	0.690
Personal independence	9	0.578	0.692
	26	0.532	0.464
	31	0.408	0.515
	33	0.575	0.611
Rigid discipline	16	0.502	-0.514
	22	0.559	0.643
	25	0.603	0.690
	32	0.575	0.682

Table 1 (continued)

Emergent

Subscales	Items	Communalities	Loadings
Sociability	24	0.599	0.607
	35	0.573	0.639
Hedonistic tone	2	0.653	0.799
	23	0.537	0.531
	30	0.665	0.792
	36	0.648	0.697
Group conformity	18	0.528	0.687
	21	0.602	0.701
Other directed	3	0.658	0.771
	7	0.683	0.761
	11	0.514	0.619
	14	0.540	0.459

THE SAMPLE

The sample was drawn from two urban and five rural high schools in Alberta. Each of the urban schools was selected at the discretion of personnel within the public and separate school systems, respectively, in Edmonton. Selection of the five rural schools was made on a random basis from the list of operating schools distributed by the Department of Education. Schools in communities with a population of more than 5000 were not included in the list of potential rural schools for use in the study. The sampling was dictated partly by considerations of cost and time, limiting the selection to schools located within a 75-mile radius of Edmonton.

Within each of the seven schools used in this study, arrangements were made with the staff to administer the questionnaire to classroom groups of students. These groups were selected in consultation with school personnel, so as to obtain a cross-section of students that would encompass both matriculation and non-matriculation programs and would also include students from grades ten and twelve.

The questionnaire was administered to a total of 484 students. Usable data were obtained from 480 completed questionnaires, representing a usable response rate of 99.2 percent. Four questionnaires were rejected, either because of incomplete responses, or because the response pattern was judged to be internally inconsistent.

DATA COLLECTION

Permission to administer the questionnaire to students within the urban schools used in the study was obtained by means of application to the public and separate school systems. Permission to administer the questionnaire within the five rural schools used in the study was obtained by means of letters written to the superintendent of schools in the districts and counties concerned. A specimen copy of the letter and authorization form used may be found in Appendix A.

Once permission to administer the questionnaire had been granted, further arrangements were made with the school principals. These arrangements allowed the researcher to personally administer the questionnaire to groups of students in the latter part of February, 1973.

Students were given some brief instructions with regard to completion of the questionnaire. In addition to those instructions which appear in printed form on the questionnaire itself, students were requested to check over the questionnaire once they had responded to every item on the instrument. Students were also told that the researcher would explain to them any item with which they had difficulty. Students were asked to record their responses on the questionnaire itself. In order to maintain anonymity, they were not required to identify themselves.

STATISTICAL TREATMENT

This study used both parametric and nonparametric statistics for the analysis of the data. For the description of the sample, nonparametric statistics were used to determine the frequency and percentage distribution of all responses to items on the questionnaire.

Description of Statistical Tests Used

Chi square. The chi square test was used in dealing with problems of association between variables. The chi square test compares observed frequencies with expected frequencies in order to study the independence or association of the variables.

The chi square test was applied in order to test for any significant differences between (1) student perceptions of a personal generation gap, and (2) their perceptions of a generation gap between their generation and their parents' generation.

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to determine the correlation between student perceptions of the parent-child relationship and their perceptions of a personal generation gap. According to Ferguson (1971:117), a basic assumption underlying the Pearson correlation coefficient is that a linear relationship exists between the variables. In order to determine the relationship between each of the parent-child relationship variables and the personal generation gap variable, bivariate frequency tables were generated. In each case, a linear relationship was found to exist.

The t test. The t test was used to determine the significance of the difference between the means of independent samples when only two groups were involved. Ferguson (1971:153) states that one of the basic assumptions underlying the t test is homogeneity of variance. Another is that the distribution of the variables in the population from which the samples are drawn is normal. For purposes of the present study, normality of distribution of the variables in the population was assumed. Where the variances for the sample were not homogeneous, the Welch t Prime Adjustment was used, and the t values and probabilities were adjusted accordingly. Because directional statements about differences between the means of groups were not made, the probability figure used in each instance was the two-tailed level of probability.

The t test was employed to compare means of perceptions of the generation gap, when the respondents were grouped according to sex, community background, and the person(s) with whom the respondent ordinarily resided.

One-way analysis of variance. One-way analysis of variance was used to test the significance of differences between means when more than two groups were involved. Ferguson (1971:219) outlines three basic assumptions underlying the analysis of variance:

1) The distribution of the dependent variable in the population from which the samples are drawn is normal.
2) The variances in the population from which the sample is drawn are equal.

3) The effects of various factors on the total variation are additive.

Ferguson (1971:219-220) also notes that while for most sets of real data these assumptions are, at best, only roughly satisfied, one advantage of the analysis of variance is that reasonable departures from ". . . normality and homogeneity may occur without seriously affecting the validity of the inferences drawn from the data."

One-way analysis of variance was used when comparisons of the mean scores on student perceptions of a personal generation gap and a generation gap for others were made among sub-samples grouped on the basis of each of the following non-dichotomous variables: age, religious affiliation, position in the family, family-size, marital status of the respondent's parents, socio-economic status, and the employment status of the student's mother.

One-way analysis of variance was also used when comparisons of mean scores for the traditional and emergent value orientations were made among sub-samples partitioned on the basis of the degree to which the respondents perceived (1) a personal generation gap, and (2) a generation gap for others.

Scheffé multiple comparison of means. The Scheffé test was employed when the probability of the F ratio for the one-way analysis of variance was found to be significant. Ferguson (1971:271) notes that the Scheffé test is not seriously affected by violations of the assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance, unless such violations are gross. The Scheffé procedure is generally considered to be a very rigorous method of comparison. In this regard, Scheffé (1959) has suggested that in using this procedure the .10 level of significance may be accepted instead of the .05 or .01 levels.

Levels of Significance

Seigel (1956:9) has recommended that in reporting research findings, the researcher should indicate the actual probability level associated with statistical findings. In accordance with this recommendation, actual probability levels were reported with the findings of this study. Probability levels were reported at the .001 level where the actual probability levels were found to be less than .001. For the purposes of discussion and description, findings with a probability level of less than or equal to .05 were referred to as being "significant." However, an exception was made with regard to application of the Scheffé test, in which case, the .10 level of probability was accepted as being "significant."

Data Analysis

Student responses to the items on the questionnaire were punched onto data cards. In addition to the information recorded on the questionnaire, every questionnaire was assigned a three-digit identification number which was also entered on each card.

Four computer programs developed by the Division of Educational Research were used for data analysis: NONP10, DEST02, ANOV10, and ANOV15. The NONP10 program was used to obtain the frequency and percentage distribution of all responses to items on the questionnaire. DEST02 was used to obtain Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients. The ANOV10 program was employed to apply t tests and the ANOV15 program was used to apply one-way analysis of variance and the Scheffé multiple comparison of means test.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented information with regard to instrumentation, the sample, data collection and statistical treatment.

The instrument used in this study was a four-part questionnaire designed to gather data with regard to demographic and socio-economic variables, the respondent's views of the parent-child relationship, value orientations of the respondent as measured by the Differential Values Inventory, and the respondent's perceptions of a personal generation gap and a generation gap for others.

Usable data were obtained from 480 students in grades ten and twelve in urban and rural centres in Alberta.

Computer programs were used in the analysis of the data. Frequency and percentage distributions of responses were obtained, and in addition, the following statistical procedures were employed: chi square, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, the t test, one-way analysis of variance, and the Scheffé multiple comparison of means test.

Chapter 4

DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

This chapter is designed to provide a more complete description of the sample based upon the usable data obtained in the study.

Sex, Age, and Grade

Sex. The division of the sample on the basis of sex resulted in nearly equal subsamples, with a slight majority (50.8 percent) being female.

Age. The majority of the students in the sample were in either the 15 or 17 year old age category. These two categories accounted for 333 students, or 69.4 percent of the total sample. Students in the 16 and 18 year old age categories made up 28.1 percent of the sample, while those in the 14 year old or younger and the 19 year old or older age categories, in total, accounted for only 2.5 percent of the sample.

Grade. The 264 grade ten students in the sample formed 55 percent of the total, while the 216 grade twelve students accounted for 45 percent.

The distribution of the sample by sex, age, and grade is given in Table 2.

Table 2

Sex, Age, and Grade

(N=480)

Classification	f	%
Sex		
Male	236	49.2
Female	244	50.8
		100.0
Age		
14 or younger	8	1.7
15	176	36.7
16	81	16.9
17	157	32.7
18	54	11.2
19 or older	4	.8
		100.0
Grade		
Ten	264	55.0
Twelve	216	45.0
		100.0

Religious Affiliation, Employment Status of the Respondent's Mother, and Community Background

Religious affiliation. Slightly more than one-half of the respondents were Protestants. Roman and Greek (Ukrainian) Catholics accounted for 33.3 percent of the sample, while the "Other" category of religious affiliation formed 3.8 percent of the sample. Respondents who claimed to have no religious affiliation accounted for 10.4 percent of the total sample.

Employment status of the respondent's mother. Approximately three-fifths of the respondents had mothers who did not work outside the home for a salary. Those students whose mother worked outside the home on a part-time basis formed about one-fifth of the sample, while those whose mother worked outside the home on a full-time basis also accounted for about one-fifth of the sample.

Community background. The division of the sample on the basis of community background resulted in nearly equal subsamples, although a slight majority had a wholly or predominantly rural background.

The distribution of the sample by religious affiliation, employment status of the respondent's mother, and community background is given in Table 3.

Table 3

Religious Affiliation, Employment Status of the Respondent's Mother, and Community Background

(N=480)

Classification	f	%
Religious Affiliation		
Catholic	160	33.3
Protestant	252	52.5
Other	18	3.8
No religious affiliation	50	10.4
		100.0
Employment Status of the Respondent's Mother		
Not working outside the home	291	60.6
Working part-time	97	20.2
Working full-time	92	19.2
		100.0
Community Background		
Rural background	244	50.8
Urban background	236	49.2
		100.0

Family Background

Family background information included data with regard to the person(s) with whom the respondent resides, his position in the family, family size, and the marital status of the respondent's parents. The distribution of the sample by family background is shown in Table 4.

Person(s) with whom the respondent resides. The overwhelming majority of respondents (97.3 percent) resided with their parents. Those living with relatives or guardians formed 1.9 percent of the sample. Students who lived with friends of their own age accounted for .4 percent of the sample, and students who lived alone also accounted for .4 percent of the total sample.

Position in the family. Students forming the largest single category occupied an "in-between" position in their family, and accounted for 45.4 percent of the total sample. The second largest category (31.3 percent) was formed by those respondents who were the oldest children in their families. Those who were the youngest members in the family accounted for 20.8 percent of the sample. Respondents in the "only child" category formed 2.5 percent of the total sample.

Family size. Approximately two-fifths of the respondents were members of families with 4 or 5 children. About one-third came from families with 2 or 3 children. Respondents who were

Table 4

Family Background

(N=480)

Classification	f	%
Person(s) with whom the respondent resides		
Parents	467	97.3
Relatives or guardians	9	1.9
Friends of the same age	2	.4
Alone	2	.4
		100.0
Position in the family		
Only child	12	2.5
Youngest child	100	20.8
In-between child	218	45.4
Oldest child	150	31.3
		100.0
Family size		
One child	12	2.5
Two or three children	163	34.0
Four or five children	193	40.2
Six or more children	112	23.3
		100.0
Marital status of the respondent's parents		
Living together	432	90.0
Divorced or separated	27	5.6
Either parent deceased	21	4.4
		100.0

members of families with 6 or more children accounted for 23.3 percent of the sample, while 2.5 percent of the respondents were members of families with only one child.

Marital status of the respondent's parents. Those respondents whose parents were living together formed 90 percent of the sample, while those whose parents were divorced or separated accounted for 5.6 percent. Respondents whose father or mother was deceased made up 4.4 percent of the sample.

Socio-Economic Status

Scores on the modified Gough Home Index Scale ranged from 2 to 20, for the sample used in this study. For the purposes of analysis, the respondents were arbitrarily categorized into three groups of approximately equal size. The 145 respondents in the "low" socio-economic category, who scored from 2 to 9 (inclusive) on the Gough Scale, formed 30.2 percent of the total sample. The 174 respondents in the "middle" socio-economic category, who scored from 10 to 12 (inclusive) on the Gough Scale, accounted for 36.3 percent of the sample. And, the 161 respondents in the "high" socio-economic category, who scored from 13 to 20 (inclusive) on the Gough Scale, made up 33.5 percent of the total sample.

A detailed list of scores on the Gough Home Index Scale is provided in Table 5. These socio-economic data are shown in graphic form in Figure 1.

Table 5

Socio-Economic Status

(N=480)

	Gough Home Index Score	f	%
High Socio-Economic Category	20	1	0.2
	19	3	0.6
	18	5	1.0
	17	15	3.1
	16	27	5.6
	15	24	5.0
	14	38	7.9
	13	48	10.0
Middle Socio-Economic Category	12	61	12.7
	11	59	12.3
	10	54	11.2
Low Socio-Economic Category	9	46	9.6
	8	28	5.8
	7	30	6.2
	6	18	3.7
	5	12	2.5
	4	6	1.2
	3	4	0.8
	2	1	0.2

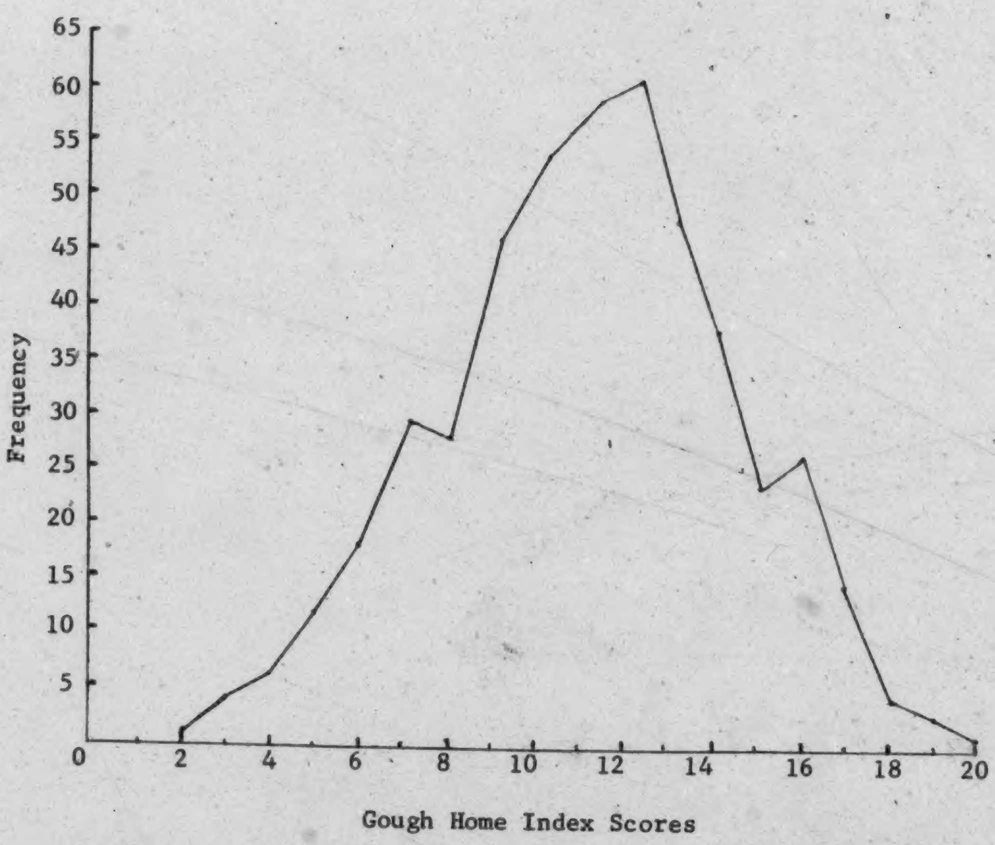

Figure 1

Frequency Polygon of Students' Scores on the Modified Gough Home Index Scale

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The sample used in this study consisted of 480 senior high school students in urban and rural Alberta. In this chapter, the students were described according to the following variables: sex, age, grade, religious affiliation, employment status of the respondent's mother, community background, family background, and socio-economic status as measured by a modified form of the Gough Home Index Scale.

Chapter 5

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of an analysis of the data with respect to the sub-problems of the study. The chapter is divided into sections dealing with either a single sub-problem, or a set of interrelated sub-problems.

Perceptions of a Personal Generation Gap and a Generation Gap for Others

Sub-problem 1. To what degree do students perceive a generation gap between themselves and their parents?

Sub-problem 2. To what degree do students perceive a generation gap between their generation and their parents' generation?

The degree to which students perceived a personal generation gap, and the degree to which they perceived a generation gap for others, was measured by responses selected from a five-part scale ranging from "always" to "never." Details of the frequency and percentage distribution by response categories for both questions are given in Table 6.

Approximately one-quarter (27.3 percent) of the respondents felt that a generation gap always or often existed between themselves and their parents. About three-quarters (72.7 percent) of the respondents felt that a generation gap occasionally, seldom or never existed for them personally. In contrast, nearly one-half

(48.3 percent) of the respondents felt that a generation gap always or often existed between their generation and their parents' generation. The remaining respondents (51.7 percent) felt that a generation gap occasionally, seldom, or never existed for other members of their generation.

The chi square test was applied in order to test for any significant differences between (1) student perceptions of a personal generation gap, and (2) their perceptions of a generation gap between their generation and their parents' generation. A chi square of 67.138 with 4 degrees of freedom was found to be significant beyond the .001 level.

The data obtained clearly indicated a significant degree of difference between student perceptions of a personal generation gap and their perceptions of a generation gap for others. Few students (4.6 percent) felt that a generation gap always existed between themselves and their parents, and similarly, few students (5.4 percent) felt that a generation gap always existed for other members of their generation. However, there was a very substantial difference between the number of students who selected the "often" response category with regard to their perceptions of a personal generation gap, and their perceptions of a generation gap for others. Nearly twice as many students (42.9 percent) felt that a generation gap often existed for other members of their generation compared with the number of students (22.7 percent) who felt that a generation gap often existed for them personally.

Table 6

Student Perceptions of a Personal Generation Gap and a Generation Gap for Others (N=480)

Questionnaire Item:	Always		Often		Occasionally		Seldom		Never	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
I feel that there is a generation gap between me personally and my parents.	22	4.6	109	22.7	189	39.4	130	27.1	30	6.2
I feel that there is a generation gap between my generation and my parents' generation.	26	5.4	206	42.9	179	37.3	53	11.0	16	3.3

Chi Square = 67.138, df = 4, Probability < .001.

An approximately equal number of students selected the "occasionally" response category with regard to their perceptions of a personal generation gap and a generation gap for others. While 39.4 percent of the respondents felt that a generation gap occasionally existed for them personally, 37.3 percent felt that a generation gap occasionally existed for other members of their generation.

A substantial difference occurred between the number of respondents who selected the "seldom" response category with regard to their perceptions of a personal generation gap and a generation gap for others. More than twice as many students (27.1 percent) felt that a generation gap seldom existed for themselves compared with the number of students (11 percent) who felt that a generation gap seldom existed for others. A similar difference occurred in the selection of the "never" response category. While 6.2 percent of the students felt that a generation gap never existed for themselves, only 3.3 percent felt that a generation gap never existed for other members of their generation.

From these data it is evident that, in general, the respondents tended to perceive a generation gap as existing to a greater degree for others than for themselves.

Perceptions of a Personal Generation Gap Related to Perceptions of the Parent-Child Relationship

Sub-problem 3. To what degree does a relationship exist between perceptions of students regarding intergenerational communication and their perceptions of a personal generation gap?

Sub-problem 4. To what degree does a relationship exist between perceptions of students regarding intergenerational participation and interaction and their perceptions of a personal generation gap?

Sub-problem 5. To what degree does a relationship exist between perceptions of students regarding intergenerational trust and their perceptions of a personal generation gap?

Sub-problem 6. To what degree does a relationship exist between perceptions of students regarding differences in political views and their perceptions of a personal generation gap?

Sub-problem 7. To what degree does a relationship exist between perceptions of students regarding differences in religious views and their perceptions of a personal generation gap?

Sub-problem 8. To what degree does a relationship exist between perceptions of students regarding differences in views on morality and their perceptions of a personal generation gap?

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed to determine the relationship between student perceptions of a personal generation gap, and their perceptions of the parent-child relationship. Student perceptions of the parent-child relationship were measured by means of six questions related to the following variables: intergenerational communication, intergenerational interaction, intergenerational trust, and similarity of views and opinions on politics, religion, and morality. Responses to the six parent-child relationship questions, as well as to the question regarding perceptions of a personal generation gap, were to be selected from a five-part scale ranging from "always" to "never." Scores of from one to five were assigned for responses to each question, with a score of one being assigned to an "always" response, a score of two to an "often" response, and so on.

The correlation coefficients obtained between perceptions of a personal generation gap and perceptions on each of the six measures of the parent-child relationship are presented in Table 7. In all cases, the correlation coefficient obtained was significant beyond the .001 level.

The highest coefficients were obtained for the correlation between student perceptions of a personal generation gap, and the variables relating to (1) intergenerational communication, and (2) intergenerational trust. The coefficients for these variables were -.476 and -.475 respectively. A somewhat lower coefficient (-.397) was obtained for the variable of intergenerational interaction. The lowest coefficients were obtained for variables relating to the similarity of views on politics (-.257), religion (-.316) and morality (-.368).

In all cases, the correlation coefficient obtained was negative. Thus, the greater the perceived degree of a personal generation gap, the lesser the degree of intergenerational communication, intergenerational trust, intergenerational interaction, and the lesser the similarity of views and opinions on politics, religion, and morality.

Table 7

Pearson Correlation Coefficients Between Student Perceptions of a Personal Generation Gap and Their Perceptions on Six Measures of the Parent-Child Relationship

Parent-Child Relationship Measures	I feel that there is a generation gap between me personally and my parents	
	r	p
Intergenerational communication	-.476	$<.001$
Intergenerational interaction	-.397	$<.001$
Intergenerational trust	-.475	$<.001$
Similarity of political views	-.257	$<.001$
Similarity of religious views	-.316	$<.001$
Similarity of views on morality	-.368	$<.001$

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were also computed in order to examine the interrelationships among perceptions of each of the six measures of the parent-child relationship. As shown in Table 8, the coefficients obtained were all positive, and ranged from a low of .231 to a high of .505. In all cases, the correlation coefficients obtained were significant beyond the .001 level.

Examination of the data revealed that a statistically significant relationship existed between student perceptions of a personal generation gap and perceptions on each of the six measures of the parent-child relationship used in this study. The presence of a perceived personal generation gap was related to a perceived break in intergenerational communication, a perceived lack of intergenerational interaction, a perceived degree of intergenerational distrust, and perceived differences in views and opinions with regard to politics, religion, and morality.

Age

Sub-problem 9. Are there significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared on the basis of age?

Responses to the questions regarding perceptions of a personal generation gap and a generation gap for others were to be selected from a five-part scale ranging from "always" to "never." Scores of from one to five were assigned for responses to each question, with a score of one being assigned to an "always" response,

Table 8

Intercorrelation Matrix for Student Perceptions on Six Measures of the Parent-Child Relationship

Parent-Child Relationship Measures	Intergenerational interaction	Intergenerational trust	Similarity of political views	Similarity of religious views	Similarity of views on morality
	r	r	r	r	r
Intergenerational communication	.413	.505	.239	.275	.295
Intergenerational interaction		.472	.272	.335	.443
Intergenerational trust			.297	.304	.422
Similarity of political views				.232	.301
Similarity of religious views					.471

Probability for each coefficient was significant beyond the .001 level.

a score of two to an "often" response, and so on. A mean score for student perceptions of a personal generation gap was determined for each age category, as was a mean score for student perceptions of a generation gap for others.

One-way analysis of variance was used to test for any significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared on the basis of age. The division of the sample on the basis of age involved the following age group categories: 15 and under, 16, 17, and 18 and over.

Data for a one-way analysis of variance of the scores for perceptions of a personal generation gap are presented in Table 9. In Table 10, data are given for a one-way analysis of variance of the scores for perceptions of a generation gap for others. No significant differences in student perceptions of a personal generation gap, or of a generation gap for others, were found when the students were grouped on the basis of age.

Sex

Sub-problem 10. Are there significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared on the basis of sex?

The t test was used to determine whether or not any significant differences existed in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared on the basis of sex. Data for scores with regard to perceptions of a personal generation gap are given in Table 11. The difference in mean scores between males and females for perceptions

Table 9

Student Perceptions of a Personal Generation Gap
Compared on the Basis of Age

Age	N	Mean*	Standard Deviation	F Ratio	Prob.
15 and under	184	3.07	0.987	0.27	0.85
16	81	3.04	1.054		
17	157	3.13	0.918		
18 and over	58	3.02	0.888		
Total	480	3.08	0.962		

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a personal generation gap.

Table 10

Student Perceptions of a Generation Gap for Others
Compared on the Basis of Age

Age	N	Mean*	Standard Deviation	F Ratio	Prob.
15 and under	184	2.72	0.927	0.82	0.48
16	81	2.57	0.907		
17	157	2.61	0.783		
18 and over	58	2.59	0.879		
Total	480	2.64	0.872		

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a generation gap for others.

of a personal generation gap was not found to be significant.

In Table 12, data are presented for scores with regard to perceptions of a generation gap for others. Examination of the data revealed that a significant difference existed in mean scores between males and females in terms of perceptions of a generation gap for others. Males were found to perceive a generation gap for others to a significantly greater degree than females.

Religious Affiliation

Sub-problem 11. Are there significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared on the basis of religious affiliation?

One-way analysis of variance was used to test for any significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared on the basis of religious affiliation. The division of the sample on the basis of religious affiliation involved four categories: Catholic, Protestant, Other, and No Religious Affiliation.

Data for a one-way analysis of variance of the scores for perceptions of a personal generation gap are presented in Table 13. Inspection of the data revealed that there was a significant difference in the student's perceptions of a personal generation gap when classified by their religious affiliation.

The Scheffé multiple comparison of means is presented in Table 14. This analysis of the data indicates that there was a

Table 11

Student Perceptions of a Personal Generation Gap Compared on the Basis of Sex

Sex	N	Mean*	t	Probability
Male	236	3.05	.681	.496
Female	244	3.11		

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a personal generation gap.

Table 12

Student Perceptions of a Generation Gap for Others Compared on the Basis of Sex

Sex	N	Mean*	t	Probability
Male	236	2.56	1.988	.047
Female	244	2.72		

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a generation gap for others.

Table 13

Student Perceptions of a Personal Generation Gap Compared on the Basis of Religious Affiliation

Religious Affiliation	N	Mean*	Standard Deviation	F Ratio	Prob.
Catholic	160	3.02	0.981	2.61	0.05
Protestant	252	3.16	0.954		
Other	18	3.22	1.060		
No Religious Affiliation	50	2.78	0.864		
Total	480	3.08	0.962		

---

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a personal generation gap.

Table 14

Probability Matrix for Scheffé Multiple Comparison of Means of Student Perceptions of a Personal Generation Gap Compared on the Basis of Religious Affiliation

	Protestant	Other	No Religious Affiliation
Catholic	0.531	0.866	0.501
Protestant		0.996	0.085
Other			0.421

significant difference (.085 level of probability) between the mean scores for those students of Protestant religious affiliation and those who had no religious affiliation. The data show that students who had no religious affiliation perceived a personal generation gap to a significantly greater degree than did students of Protestant religious affiliation.

Data for a one-way analysis of variance of the scores for perceptions of a generation gap for others are given in Table 15. No significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap for others were found when the students were classified by their religious affiliation.

Family Background

Sub-problem 12. Are there significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared on the basis of family background?

Student perceptions of a generation gap were examined in relation to family background data, which included information with regard to the person(s) with whom the respondent resides, his position in the family, family size, and the marital status of the respondent's parents.

Person(s) with whom the respondent resides. The *t* test was used to determine whether or not any significant differences existed in student perceptions of a generation gap when grouped according to whether or not they lived with their parents. Data for

Table 15

Student Perceptions of a Generation Gap for Others
Compared on the Basis of Religious Affiliation

Religious Affiliation	N	Mean*	Standard Deviation	F Ratio	Prob.
Catholic	160	2.71	0.954	0.84	0.47
Protestant	252	2.60	0.839		
Other	18	2.78	0.943		
No Religious Affiliation	50	2.56	0.733		
Total	480	2.64	0.872		

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a generation gap for others.

scores with regard to perceptions of a personal generation gap are presented in Table 16.

An examination of the data indicated that the mean score for those who did not reside with their parents was somewhat higher than the mean score for those who did reside with their parents. Those who did not reside with their parents appeared to perceive a personal generation gap to a lesser degree than those who did reside with their parents. However, the difference in mean scores was not found to be statistically significant at an acceptable level of probability.

In Table 17, data are given for scores with regard to perceptions of a generation gap for others. The differences in mean scores between those who resided with their parents and those who did not was not found to be significant.

Position in the family. Use was made of one-way analysis of variance in order to test for any significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared on the basis of the respondent's position in the family. The division of the sample on the basis of position in the family involved the following four categories: an only child, the youngest child, an in-between child, and the oldest child.

Data for a one-way analysis of variance of the scores for perceptions of a personal generation gap are shown in Table 18. In Table 19, data are presented for a one-way analysis of variance of the scores for perceptions of a generation gap for others. No

Table 16

Student Perceptions of a Personal Generation Gap
Compared on the Basis of Residence

Residence	N	Mean*	_t_	Probability
With parents	467	3.06	1.755	.080
Not with parents	13	3.54		

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a personal generation gap.

Table 17

Student Perceptions of a Generation Gap for Others
Compared on the Basis of Residence

Residence	N	Mean*	_t_	Probability
With parents	467	2.64	.543	.588
Not with parents	13	2.77		

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a generation gap for others.

Table 18

Student Perceptions of a Personal Generation Gap Compared on the Basis of Position in the Family

Position in the family	N	Means*	Standard Deviation	F Ratio	Prob.
An only child	12	3.42	0.996	1.00	0.39
The youngest child	100	3.04	0.942		
An in-between child	218	3.03	0.988		
The oldest child	150	3.15	0.937		
Total	480	3.08	0.962		

---

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a personal generation gap.

Table 19

Student Perceptions of a Generation Gap for Others Compared on the Basis of Position in the Family

Position in the family	N	Mean*	Standard Deviation	F Ratio	Prob.
An only child	12	2.42	0.793	0.97	0.41
The youngest child	100	2.69	0.825		
An in-between child	218	2.68	0.924		
The oldest child	150	2.56	0.831		
Total	480	2.64	0.872		

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a generation gap for others.

significant differences in student perceptions of a personal generation gap, or of a generation gap for others, were found when the students were categorized according to their position in the family. It might be noted here that respondents in the only child category had a mean score for perceptions of a personal generation gap which was somewhat above the mean score for respondents in the other three categories. The difference in means, however, as already pointed out, was not statistically significant at an acceptable level of probability.

Family size. One-way analysis of variance was used to test for significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared on the basis of family size. The following four categories resulted from a division of the sample on the basis of family size: one child, two or three children, four or five children, and six or more children.

In Table 20, data are presented for a one-way analysis of variance of scores for perceptions of a personal generation gap. Table 21 shows data for a one-way analysis of variance of scores for perceptions of a generation gap for others. Inspection of the data revealed that no significant differences in student perceptions of a personal generation gap, or of a generation gap for others, existed when the students were categorized on the basis of family size.

Marital status of the respondent's parents. Use was made of one-way analysis of variance in order to test for any significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared

Table 20

Student Perceptions of a Personal Generation Gap Compared on the Basis of Family Size

Family Size	N	Mean*	Standard Deviation	F Ratio	Prob.
One child	12	3.42	0.996	0.79	0.50
Two or three children	163	3.09	0.980		
Four or five children	193	3.02	0.930		
Six or more children	112	3.12	0.993		
Total	480	3.08	0.962		

---

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a personal generation gap.

Table 21

Student Perceptions of a Generation Gap for Others Compared on the Basis of Family Size

Family size	N	Mean*	Standard Deviation	F Ratio	Prob.
One child	12	2.42	0.793	0.49	0.69
Two or three children	163	2.67	0.896		
Four or five children	193	2.61	0.866		
Six or more children	112	2.68	0.862		
Total	480	2.64	0.872		

---

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a generation gap for others.

on the basis of the marital status of the respondent's parents. The division of the sample on the basis of the marital status of the respondent's parents involved the following three categories: parents living together, parents divorced or separated, and either parent deceased.

Data for a one-way analysis of variance of scores for perceptions of a personal generation gap are shown in Table 22. In Table 23, data are given for a one-way analysis of variance of scores for perceptions of a generation gap for others. No significant differences were found in student perceptions of a personal generation gap, or of a generation gap for others, when the students were grouped according to the marital status of their parents.

Community Background

Sub-problem 13. Are there significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared on the basis of community background?

Two categories of community background were examined: rural, those students who had a town, village or farm background; and urban, those students who had a city background. The *t* test was used to determine whether or not any significant differences existed in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared on the basis of community background.

Data for scores with regard to perceptions of a personal generation gap are shown in Table 24. An examination of the data indicated that the difference in means was not statistically

Table 22

Student Perceptions of a Personal Generation Gap Compared on the Basis of the Marital Status of the Respondent's Parents

Marital status of the respondent's parents	N	Mean*	Standard Deviation	F Ratio	Prob.
Living together	432	3.07	0.961	0.18	0.83
Divorced or separated	27	3.19	1.039		
Either parent deceased	21	3.10	0.944		
Total	480	3.08	0.962		

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a personal generation gap.

Table 23

Student Perceptions of a Generation Gap for Others Compared on the Basis of the Marital Status of the Respondent's Parents

Marital status of the respondent's parents	N	Mean*	Standard Deviation	F Ratio	Prob.
Living together	432	2.62	0.869	1.57	0.21
Divorced or separated	27	2.93	0.917		
Either parent deceased	21	2.67	0.856		
Total	480	2.64	0.872		

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a generation gap for others.

significant at an acceptable level of probability for the two-tailed test. However, students of urban community background had a mean score which was somewhat higher than the mean score for students of rural community background. Those of rural background appeared to perceive a personal generation gap to a somewhat greater degree than those of urban background.

In Table 25, data are presented for scores with regard to perceptions of a generation gap for others. Inspection of the data revealed that while the urban category had a mean score for perceptions of a generation gap for others which was somewhat higher than the mean score for the rural category, the difference in means was not statistically significant at an acceptable level of probability.

Socio-Economic Status

Sub-problem 14. Are there significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared on the basis of socio-economic status?

One-way analysis of variance was used to test for any significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared on the basis of socio-economic status. Three categories of socio-economic status were examined: "low" socio-economic status for those students who scored 9 or less on the modified Gough Home Index Scale, "middle" socio-economic status for those who scored 10, 11, or 12 on the Gough Scale, and

Table 24

Student Perceptions of a Personal Generation Gap Compared on the Basis of Community Background

Community Background	N	Means*	t	Probability
Rural	244	3.00	1.692	.091
Urban	236	3.15		

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a personal generation gap.

Table 25

Student Perceptions of a Generation Gap for Others Compared on the Basis of Community Background

Community Background	N	Means*	t**	Probability**
Rural	244	2.59	1.365	.173
Urban	236	2.69		

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a generation gap for others.

** Because the variances were not sufficiently homogeneous, the Welch t Prime Adjustment was used and the t value and probability have been adjusted accordingly.

"high" socio-economic status for those who scored 13 or more on the Gough Scale.

Data for a one-way analysis of variance of the scores for perceptions of a personal generation gap are presented in Table 26. Although the mean scores for the middle and high socio-economic groups were somewhat higher than the mean score for the low socio-economic status group, the differences in the means were not found to be statistically significant.

In Table 27, data are given for a one-way analysis of variance of scores for perceptions of a generation gap for others. No significant differences were found in student perceptions of a generation gap for others, when the students were grouped according to socio-economic status.

Value Orientations

Sub-problem 15. Are there significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared on the basis of value orientations?

As outlined in Chapter 3 (see page 29), an orientation score for each respondent was obtained on the traditional and emergent value scales. In order to analyze the data with regard to value orientations, student perceptions of a generation gap were used as the independent variable, so that the students could be grouped on this basis, rather than on the basis of their value orientations. The mean scores on the traditional and emergent value orientation

Table 26

Student Perceptions of a Personal Generation Gap
Compared on the Basis of Socio-Economic Status

Socio-economic status	N	Mean*	Standard Deviation	F Ratio	Prob.
Low	145	2.95	0.985	1.97	0.14
Middle	174	3.13	0.979		
High	161	3.14	0.919		
Total	480	3.08	0.962		

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a personal generation gap.

Table 27

Student Perceptions of a Generation Gap for Others Compared on the Basis of Socio-Economic Status

Socio-economic status	N	Mean*	Standard Deviation	F Ratio	Prob.
Low	145	2.53	0.800	1.71	0.18
Middle	174	2.71	0.919		
High	161	2.66	0.880		
Total	480	2.64	0.872		

---

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a generation gap for others.

scales for the five groups were compared to determine if differences did exist. The categories into which the students were grouped were derived from the degree to which they perceived a personal generation gap, and the degree to which they perceived a generation gap for others. The five categories examined were: "always," "often," "occasionally," "seldom," and "never." One-way analysis of variance was used to determine whether or not any significant differences in value orientations existed among the students when grouped according to their perceptions of a generation gap.

Traditional value orientation. This value orientation is characteristic of an individual who emphasizes the following: (1) work-success ethic, (2) future-time orientation, (3) personal independence, and (4) rigid discipline. The seventeen items that were designed to measure the traditional value orientation have been numerically listed in Table 1 (see page 30).

Table 28 shows the data for a one-way analysis of variance of the traditional value orientation scores when the students were grouped according to their perceptions of a personal generation gap. Although the mean scores for each group were successively lower, indicating the greatest acceptance of the traditional value orientation for those students who felt that a generation gap never existed between themselves and their parents, an inspection of the data revealed that no significant differences in traditional value orientations existed when students were grouped according to their perceptions of a personal generation gap.

Table 28

Traditional Value Orientation Scores Compared for Students Grouped According to Their Perceptions of a Personal Generation Gap

Perceived degree of a personal generation gap	N	Mean*	Standard Deviation	F Ratio	Prob.
Always	22	43.55	7.42	1.13	0.34
Often	109	43.04	7.99		
Occasionally	189	42.55	8.24		
Seldom	130	41.95	8.06		
Never	30	39.83	9.28		
Total	480	42.37	8.16		

---

* The lower the mean score, the greater the acceptance of the Traditional Value Orientation.

In Table 29, data are given for a one-way analysis of variance of scores when students were grouped according to their perceptions of a generation gap for others. Inspection of the data indicated that there was a significant difference in the mean scores for traditional value orientations when students were grouped according to their perceptions of a generation gap for others. However, as shown by the Scheffé multiple comparison of means presented in Table 30, no statistically significant differences were found between any pair of means. Those means which came closest to being significant at an acceptable level of probability are the "seldom" and "always" groups (0.142), and the "seldom" and "never" groups (0.155). The Newman-Keuls test for comparison of ordered means was applied, and significant differences were found between the "seldom" and "always" groups, the "seldom" and "never" groups, and the "never" and "occasionally" groups.

Results of the Newman-Keuls test have been provided in Table 31. Although these data help to account for the significant probability level obtained for the one-way analysis of variance test, the results must not be misinterpreted. They have been presented only for the purposes of exploration and clarification. It is important to note that the Newman-Keuls test cannot be justifiably applied to the data at hand, because of grossly unequal cell frequencies, including small frequencies in key cells, and because of substantially unequal variances among the groups.

Table 29

Traditional Value Orientation Scores Compared for Students Grouped According to Their Perceptions of a Generation Gap for Others

Perceived degree of a generation gap for others	N	Mean*	Standard Deviation	F Ratio	Prob.
Always	26	38.69	6.66	3.18	0.01
Often	206	42.40	7.71		
Occasionally	179	42.85	8.35		
Seldom	53	43.79	9.43		
Never	16	37.81	7.49		
Total	480	42.37	8.16		

---

* The lower the mean score, the greater the acceptance of the Traditional Value Orientation.

Table 30

Probability Matrix for Scheffé Multiple Comparison of Means for Traditional Value Orientations for Students Grouped According to Their Perceptions of a Generation Gap for Others

Perceived degree of a generation gap for others	Often	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
Always	0.305	0.201	0.142	0.998
Often		0.990	0.871	0.313
Occasionally			0.969	0.225
Seldom				0.155

Table 31

Probability Matrix for Newman-Keuls Comparison Between Ordered Means: Traditional Value Orientations for Students Grouped According to Their Perceptions of a Generation Gap for Others

Perceived degree of a generation gap for others	Seldom	Occasionally	Often	Always	Never
Never	$p<.01$	$p<.01$	--		
Always	$p<.05$	--			
Often	--				
Occasionally					
Seldom					

Emergent value orientation. This value orientation is characteristic of an individual who emphasizes the following: (1) other directed, (2) hedonistic tone, (3) sociability, (4) group conformity. The twelve items that were designed to measure the emergent value orientation have been numerically listed in Table 1 (see page 31).

Data for a one-way analysis of variance of the emergent value orientation scores when students were grouped according to their perceptions of a personal generation gap are presented in Table 32. Inspection of the data indicated that no significant differences in emergent value orientations existed when students were grouped according to their perceptions of a personal generation gap.

In Table 33, data are given for a one-way analysis of variance of scores when students were grouped according to their perceptions of a generation gap for others. Examination of the data indicated that students who perceived that a generation gap always existed for others, and students who perceived that a generation gap never existed for others, had somewhat lower mean scores than did students in the other three categories. Students in the "always" and "never" categories appear to accept to a greater degree, the emergent value orientation. Although this trend does appear in the data, the differences in emergent value orientation when students were grouped according to their perceptions of a generation gap for others were not found to be statistically significant at an acceptable level of probability.

Table 32

Emergent Value Orientation Scores Compared for Students Grouped According to Their Perceptions of a Personal Generation Gap

Perceived degree of a personal generation gap	N	Mean*	Standard Deviation	F Ratio	Prob.
Always	22	25.27	6.09	1.53	0.19
Often	109	26.50	5.79		
Occasionally	189	27.16	6.21		
Seldom	130	28.01	5.81		
Never	30	26.90	6.54		
Total	480	27.14	6.03		

* The lower the mean score, the greater the acceptance of the Emergent Value Orientation.

Table 33

Emergent Value Orientation Scores Compared for Students Grouped According to Their Perceptions of a Generation Gap for Others

Perceived degree of a generation gap for others	N	Mean*	Standard Deviation	F Ratio	Prob.
Always	26	25.08	6.82	2.01	0.09
Often	206	26.99	6.10		
Occasionally	179	27.57	5.87		
Seldom	53	28.02	5.95		
Never	16	24.63	5.26		
Total	480	27.14	6.03		

* The lower the mean score, the greater the acceptance of the Emergent Value Orientation.

Employment Status of the Student's Mother

Sub-problem 16. Are there significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared on the basis of the employment status of the student's mother?

One-way analysis of variance was used to test for any significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap when compared on the basis of the employment status of the student's mother. The following three categories resulted from a division of the sample on the basis of employment status of the respondent's mother: mother not working outside the home, mother working part-time, and mother working full-time.

In Table 34, data are presented for a one-way analysis of variance of scores for perceptions of a personal generation gap. Table 35 gives data for a one-way analysis of variance of scores for perceptions of a generation gap for others. Inspection of the data indicated that there were no significant differences in student perceptions of a personal generation gap, or of a generation gap for others, when the students were categorized on the basis of employment status of the mother.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter an analysis of the data with respect to each of the sub-problems of the study has been presented.

An examination of the data revealed that just over one-quarter of the respondents felt that a generation gap always

Table 34

Student Perceptions of a Personal Generation Gap Compared on the Basis of Employment Status of the Mother

Employment status of the mother	N	Mean*	Standard Deviation	F Ratio	Prob.
Not working outside the home	291	3.05	0.969	0.63	0.53
Working part-time	97	3.18	1.041		
Working full-time	92	3.05	0.856		
Total	480	3.08	0.962		

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a personal generation gap.

Table 35

Student Perceptions of a Generation Gap for Others Compared on the Basis of Employment Status of the Mother

Employment status of the mother	N	Mean*	Standard Deviation	F Ratio	Prob.
Not working outside the home	291	2.65	0.926	0.89	0.41
Working part-time	97	2.71	0.749		
Working full-time	92	2.54	0.818		
Total	480	2.64	0.872		

* The lower the mean score, the greater the perceived degree of a generation gap for others.

or often existed between themselves and their parents. The remaining three-quarters felt that a generation gap occasionally, seldom, or never existed between themselves and their parents. In contrast, almost one-half of the respondents felt that a generation gap always or often existed for other members of their generation. The remaining half felt that a generation gap occasionally, seldom, or never existed for other members of their generation. The data obtained indicated that significant differences existed between students' perceptions of a personal generation gap and their perceptions of a generation gap for others.

Analysis of the data also indicated that the presence of a perceived personal generation gap is related to a perceived break in intergenerational communication, a perceived lack of intergenerational interaction, a perceived degree of intergenerational distrust, and perceived differences in views and opinions with regard to politics, religion, and morality.

A significant difference was found in student perceptions of a generation gap for others when compared on the basis of sex. Males were found to perceive a generation gap for others to a significantly greater degree than females. An examination of the data also revealed that a significant difference existed in student perceptions of a personal generation gap when compared on the basis of religious affiliation. Students who had no religious affiliation perceived a personal generation gap to a significantly greater degree than did students of Protestant religious affiliation.

No statistically significant differences in student perceptions of a personal generation gap were found when the students were grouped on the basis of age, sex, family background, community background, socio-economic status, or the employment status of the student's mother. Nor did significant differences in traditional or emergent value orientations exist when students were grouped according to their perceptions of a personal generation gap.

Further, no statistically significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap for others were found when the students were grouped on the basis of age, religious affiliation, family background, community background, socio-economic status, or the employment status of the student's mother. Nor did significant differences in emergent value orientations exist when students were grouped according to their perceptions of a generation gap for others. A statistically significant F ratio was obtained for differences in the mean scores for traditional value orientations when students were grouped according to their perceptions of a generation gap for others. However, no significant differences were found between any pair of means when the Scheffé multiple comparison of means test was applied.

Chapter 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

SUMMARY

The Problem

The primary purpose of this study was to examine perceptions of students regarding the generation gap. The study was designed to investigate the degree to which students perceive a generation gap between themselves and their parents, and between their generation and their parents' generation. Further, an attempt was made to discover some of the factors in the parent-child relationship which may be related to the generation gap. In addition, the study was intended to examine differences in student perceptions of the generation gap in terms of the following variables: age, sex, religious affiliation, family background, community background, socio-economic status, value orientations, and the employment status of the student's mother.

Related Literature

A review of literature related to the study suggested that relatively little empirical research has been carried out with regard to the generation gap. The literature examined also indicated that the terms "youth culture" and "alienation" are of little aid in arriving at a clear conception of the generation gap. The term "generation gap" itself has not been clearly defined, and there is widespread disagreement as to the causes, and indeed the significance, of this phenomenon.

The review of literature demonstrated the need for a study to examine the position of youth on the generation gap issue. Examination of the literature also indicated that student perceptions of the generation gap could be examined in terms of a number of demographic variables, socio-economic status, and the value orientations held by students.

Methodology

The sample for the study consisted of students in grades ten and twelve from urban and rural centres in Alberta. Usable data were obtained from 480 students by means of a four-part questionnaire designed to gather information with regard to demographic and socio-economic variables, the parent-child relationship, value orientations as measured by the Differential Values Inventory, and perceptions of a personal generation gap and a generation gap for others.

The questionnaires were administered by the researcher, and the information obtained was punched onto data cards for computer analysis. Frequency and percentage distributions of responses were determined, and the following statistical procedures were employed: chi square, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, the t test, one-way analysis of variance, and the Scheffé multiple comparison of means test.

Findings with a probability level less than or equal to .05 were referred to as being "significant," with the exception of findings which resulted from application of the Scheffé test, in which case the .10 level of probability was accepted as being "significant."

Findings

Approximately one-quarter of the respondents felt that a generation gap always or often existed between themselves and their parents. The remaining three-quarters felt that a generation gap occasionally, seldom, or never existed between themselves and their parents. In contrast, nearly one-half of the respondents felt that a generation gap always or often existed for other members of their generation. The remaining half felt that a generation gap occasionally, seldom, or never existed for other members of their generation. The difference between students' perceptions of a personal generation gap and their perceptions of a generation gap for others was found to be statistically significant.

An analysis of the data also revealed that the presence of a perceived personal generation gap is related to a perceived break in intergenerational communication, a perceived lack of intergenerational interaction, a perceived degree of intergenerational distrust, and perceived differences in views and opinions with regard to politics, religion, and morality.

A significant difference was found in student perceptions of a generation gap for others when compared on the basis of sex. Males were found to perceive a generation gap for others to a significantly greater degree than females. A significant difference in student perceptions of a personal generation gap was found to exist when students were compared on the basis of religious affiliation. Respondents who had no religious affiliation perceived a personal generation gap to a significantly greater degree than did students of Protestant religious affiliation.

No statistically significant differences in student perceptions of a personal generation gap were found when the students were grouped according to age, sex, family background, community background, socio-economic status, or the employment status of the student's mother. Nor were significant differences in traditional or emergent value orientations found to exist when students were grouped according to their perceptions of a personal generation gap.

In addition, no statistically significant differences in student perceptions of a generation gap for others were found when the students were grouped according to age, religious affiliation, family background, community background, socio-economic status, or the employment status of the student's mother. Nor did significant differences in emergent value orientations exist when students were grouped according to their perceptions of a generation gap for others. A statistically significant F ratio was obtained for differences in the mean scores for traditional value orientations when students were grouped according to their perceptions of a generation gap for others. However, no significant differences were found between any pair of means when the Scheffé multiple comparison of means test was applied.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

One of the chief purposes of this study was to determine the degree to which students perceive a generation gap between themselves and their parents, and between their own generation and their parents' generation. An analysis of the data revealed that approximately one-quarter of the respondents felt that a generation gap always or often existed for them personally. For these individuals, the generation gap may present a very real and difficult problem.

At the same time, nearly one-half of the respondents felt that a generation gap always or often existed for others. This rather marked contrast between perceptions of a personal generation gap and perceptions of a generation gap for others appears to provide some support for the contention that the generation gap phenomenon does not in fact exist to the degree to which it is often held to exist. This particular finding indicates that a considerable measure of misconception is associated with the generation gap problem. Teachers and administrators should be aware of the misconceptions which may be held about the generation gap, and it is suggested here that they can help to expose, and thereby reduce, some of the misunderstanding which surrounds the generation gap problem.

Teachers and administrators can work to bring students and their parents together in various activities initiated by the school. Such activities could include student-parent discussion groups, as well as athletic, theatrical, and musical events and a variety of academically-oriented programs. These activities might well serve to promote a greater degree of intergenerational communication, and thus help to reduce the misunderstanding which may exist between students and their parents.

Another major objective of the study was to examine the relationship between student perceptions of a personal generation gap and their perceptions of the parent-child relationship. An analysis of the data indicated that the generation gap may be related to each of the following phenomena: a break in intergenerational communication, an absence of mutually enjoyed interaction involving both generations, a degree of intergenerational distrust, and differences in views and opinions with regard to politics, religion, and morality. While each of these component measures of the parent-child relationship has been identified as being potentially related to a generation gap, it should not be concluded that they are the only components which may be related to a generation gap. A number of other components, which the present study has not identified, may well exist. Further, it is not implied that a generation gap is always related to a combination of components which includes each of the six parent-child relationship elements identified here. It is important to recognize that because of individual differences, no one component or set of components may be identified as being characteristic of all generation gaps between youth and their parents.

Notwithstanding these limitations, however, the finding that these six parent-child relationship elements may be related to a generation gap is an important one. The existence of this relationship may have important implications for educational personnel. As already outlined above, the school could initiate various intergenerational activities which might result in improved parent-child relationships. The school may also be able to lessen the impact of the generation gap through modifications in curriculum and instruction. If individuals are educated to accept change as an ever-present phenomenon in society, they may find change in another generation both more acceptable and easier to understand.

The findings of the study also revealed that, with two exceptions, no statistically significant differences in student perceptions of a personal generation gap, or a generation gap for others, were found when the students were compared on the basis of age, sex, religious affiliation, family background, community background, socio-economic status, and the employment status of the student's mother. Exceptions to these results included the finding that males perceived a generation gap for others to a significantly greater degree than females, and the finding that students who had no religious affiliation perceived a personal generation gap to a significantly greater degree than did students of Protestant religious affiliation.

It is difficult to surmise as to why males perceive a generation gap for others to a greater extent than females. A possible explanation for this finding may be that in the socialization process of self-definition, male adolescents are taught to see themselves as more aggressive and more independent than females. In this regard, perceptions of greater aggressiveness and independence may be directly related to perceptions of a greater generation gap between youth and their parents.

With regard to the variable of religious affiliation, those of Protestant religious affiliation apparently feel somewhat closer to their parents than do students who have no religious affiliation. While students of Catholic and Other religious affiliations also perceived a personal generation gap to a lesser degree than those who had no religious affiliation, these differences were not statistically significant at an acceptable level of probability. It would appear, however, that those individuals who do not claim an association with a given system of faith or worship perceive a greater degree of separation between themselves and their parents than those individuals who do claim a particular religious affiliation.

This difference could possibly be explained in terms of value orientations. As noted in the review of related literature, Cathcart (1967) found that students who were church members tended to more traditional in their value orientations. The present study was, of course, limited in this regard to an examination of religious affiliation, rather than church membership as such. Although a trend was found indicating that the greater the acceptance of the traditional value orientation, the lesser the perceived degree of a personal generation gap, the differences in traditional value orientations for students grouped according to their perceptions of a personal generation gap were not found to be statistically significant.

It is evident from the findings of this study that the generation gap does not exist for some individuals and that it exists to varying degrees for others. It must also be recognized that differences in perceptions of a generation gap cannot be explained simply by identifying such variables as, for example, community background, or the employment status of an individual's mother. The complexity of the generation gap phenomenon implies the need for further research in this area.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

A number of suggestions can be made with regard to further research:

1) Another investigation could be conducted with modifications in the instrument used in the present study. One suggested modification is the inclusion of a scale designed to measure an individual's religiosity. While the present study found a difference in student perceptions of a generation gap based on religious affiliation, a religiosity scale may result in more useful information.

2) Another study could also be designed to intentionally include a larger sub-group of respondents from one-child families, and a larger sub-group of respondents who have high socio-economic status. An analysis of the data from the present study indicated that students in the only-child category, and students who had high socio-economic status tended to perceive a personal generation gap to a lesser degree than did other students. However, the differences for respondents in these sub-groups were not found to be statistically significant. The small number of respondents in these sub-groups may well have contributed to the failure to

establish statistically significant differences with regard to the variables of family size and socio-economic status.

3) Research could be carried out to examine in greater detail the generation gap phenomenon as it applies in general to youth-adult relationships. Although the present study did examine some aspects of the generation gap in its general form, it was primarily concerned with youth-parent relationships, rather than youth-adult relationships.

4) Further research on the generation gap could be conducted to examine the issue from the adult perspective, as well as that of youth. The sample for such a study could include, for example, youth and their parents, or youth, teachers, and administrators.

5) Data gathered in the present study could be used for further analysis. For example, multiple regression analysis could be used to identify predictors of the generation gap. In addition, the data could be employed to investigate in detail the value orientations measured in the study.

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APPENDIX A

Correspondence

LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS

Dear

This letter is written pursuant to our recent telephone conversation regarding your permission to administer a questionnaire to students in grades ten and twelve at . . . . High School. I have enclosed a copy of the questionnaire. I estimate that it will take approximately 30 minutes to administer the questionnaire in each classroom.

All information obtained by means of this questionnaire will, of course, remain confidential, and will be used for research purposes only. The data from the questionnaire will be used in my M.Ed. thesis entitled, "A Study on Student Perceptions of the Generation Gap." I plan to administer the questionnaire to approximately 500 students in grades ten and twelve in Alberta.

I wish to request your permission to administer the questionnaire to a class of grade ten students, and a class of grade twelve students at . . . . High School. If you are willing to grant permission for the administration of the questionnaire, kindly return the authorization form to me in the enclosed, self-addressed envelope.

Thank you.

Yours truly,

Ken Vandenberg

Authorization Form

Permission is granted to Ken Vandenberg
of the University of Alberta to administer
a questionnaire to a class of grade ten
students and a class of grade twelve students
at . . . . High School.
Permission is also granted to contact
. . . ., principal of . . . .
High School, to make arrangements with regard
to a suitable time and date for the
administration of this questionnaire.
I understand that all of the information
to be gathered is confidential and will
be used for research purposes only.

Signed: ______________________
Superintendent of Schools,
. . . .

Comments: ______________________
____
____

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE

This is a study of relationships between youth and their parents. Please answer the questions below to the best of your ability. This is not a test. All responses made in this questionnaire will be considered confidential, and to further ensure your privacy, it is not necessary to put your name on this questionnaire.

PART I

Please circle the letter of the response which applies to you.
(Circle the letter of only one alternative in each case.)

1. What is your sex?

   A. male
   B. female

2. How old are you?

   A. 14 or younger
   B. 15
   C. 16
   D. 17
   E. 18
   F. 19 or older

3. In which grade are you?

   A. Ten
   B. Twelve

4. What is your religious affiliation?

   A. Protestant
   B. Roman Catholic
   C. No religious affiliation
   D. Other (please specify): ____________________

5. What is your mother's employment status?

   A. Not working outside the home for a salary
   B. Working part-time
   C. Working full-time

6. With whom do you live?

   A. With parents
   B. With relatives or guardians
   C. With friends of your own age
   D. Alone

C C
1
2
3
4
5
6

C C
7
8
9
10

7. What is your position in the family?

   A. An only child
   B. The youngest child
   C. The oldest child
   D. An in-between child

8. How many brothers and sisters do you have?

   A. None
   B. One or two
   C. Three or four
   D. Five or more

9. Which of the following is applicable to your parents?

   A. Living together
   B. Divorced or separated
   C. Father deceased
   D. Mother deceased
   E. Both parents deceased

10. How many years have you lived in your present community?

    A. 5 years or longer
    B. Less than 5 years (If you select this answer, please circle one of the following items):

    Where did you live for the greatest length of time before coming to your present community?

    1. on a farm
    2. in a village or town
    3. in a city

11. Does your family own a car?

    A. Yes
    B. No

12. Does your family have a garage or carport?

    A. Yes
    B. No

13. Did your father go to senior high school?

    A. Yes
    B. No

14. Did your mother go to senior high school?

    A. Yes
    B. No

15. Did your father go to university?

    A. Yes
    B. No

16. Did your mother go to university?

    A. Yes
    B. No

17. Is there a writing desk in your home?

    A. Yes
    B. No

18. Does your family have a stereo record player?

    A. Yes
    B. No

19. Does your family have a piano?

    A. Yes
    B. No

20. Does your family get a daily newspaper?

    A. Yes
    B. No

21. Do you have your own room at home?

    A. Yes
    B. No

22. Does your family own its own home?

    A. Yes
    B. No

23. Is there an encyclopedia in your home?

    A. Yes
    B. No

24. Does your family have more than 100 books?

    A. Yes
    B. No

25. Did your parents borrow any books from the library last year?

    A. Yes
    B. No

26. Does your family leave your community each year for a holiday?

    A. Yes
    B. No

27. Do you belong to any club where you have to pay dues?

    A. Yes
    B. No

28. Does your mother belong to any clubs or organizations such as study, church, art, or social clubs?

    A. Yes
    B. No

C C

29. Does your family own a color TV set?

    A. Yes
    B. No

30. Have you ever had lessons in music, dancing, art, etc., outside of school?

    A. Yes
    B. No

11-12

PART II

Answer the following questions by circling the letter of the alternative which best describes the particular relationship between you and your parents. (Circle the letter of only one alternative in each case.):

1. I am able to express my opinions and feelings to my parents quite freely:

    A. always
    B. often
    C. occasionally
    D. seldom
    E. never

13

2. I engage in mutually enjoyed activities with my parents:

    A. always
    B. often
    C. occasionally
    D. seldom
    E. never

14

3. My views and opinions on politics come close to those held by my parents:

    A. always
    B. often
    C. occasionally
    D. seldom
    E. never

15

C C

4. My views and opinions on religion come close to those held by my parents:

   A. always
   B. often
   C. occasionally
   D. seldom
   E. never

16

5. My views and opinions on morality come close to those held by my parents:

   A. always
   B. often
   C. occasionally
   D. seldom
   E. never

17

6. I can trust and confide in my parents:

   A. always
   B. often
   C. occasionally
   D. seldom
   E. never

18

PART III

Directions:

1. Read each item carefully, beginning each with "I ought to."
2. Think about how well the statement agrees with your feelings.
3. Circle the number of the best answer for each statement.

I AGREE:

I ought to:	Very Strongly	Strongly	Moderately	Somewhat	Not Much	
1. plan carefully for future opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	19
2. feel that present happiness is most important	1	2	3	4	5	20
3. be careful not to offend others	1	2	3	4	5	21
4. put in long hours of work each day	1	2	3	4	5	22
5. have firm convictions about educational matters	1	2	3	4	5	23

	I AGREE:					C C
I ought to:	Very Strongly	Strongly	Moderately	Somewhat	Not much	
6. attain a higher position than my father attained	1	2	3	4	5	24
7. consider carefully the feelings of others	1	2	3	4	5	25
8. save money carefully	1	2	3	4	5	26
9. make my own decisions in most matters	1	2	3	4	5	27
10. choose a job where I can work with many interesting people	1	2	3	4	5	28
11. strive for peace with everyone	1	2	3	4	5	29
12. have firm ideas about politics	1	2	3	4	5	30
13. try to do things better than others	1	2	3	4	5	31
14. make as many friends as possible	1	2	3	4	5	32
15. spend less and save more	1	2	3	4	5	33
16. resist strict discipline in school	1	2	3	4	5	34
17. be very ambitious	1	2	3	4	5	35
18. feel that the group should decide what kind of behavior it will approve	1	2	3	4	5	36
19. feel that present sacrifice may be important for future gains	1	2	3	4	5	37
20. get a well paying job	1	2	3	4	5	38
21. wear clothes similar to those of my friends	1	2	3	4	5	39
22. feel children should obey their parents	1	2	3	4	5	40

I ought to:	I AGREE:					C C
	Very Strongly	Strongly	Moderately	Somewhat	Not Much	
23. do things which permit me to have fun and be happy	1	2	3	4	5	41
24. be very sociable	1	2	3	4	5	42
25. accept strict discipline in the home	1	2	3	4	5	43
26. try to avoid making the same mistake twice	1	2	3	4	5	44
27. get a job which has status	1	2	3	4	5	45
28. feel that work comes before pleasure	1	2	3	4	5	46
29. plan and save for the future	1	2	3	4	5	47
30. feel present happiness is the most important thing in life	1	2	3	4	5	48
31. spend as much time as I can working independently	1	2	3	4	5	49
32. feel that old-fashioned discipline is needed today	1	2	3	4	5	50
33. stand by my convictions	1	2	3	4	5	51
34. strive to be an expert at something	1	2	3	4	5	52
35. have fun attending parties and being with people	1	2	3	4	5	53
36. get as much pleasure out of life as possible	1	2	3	4	5	54
37. feel that it is right to be very ambitious	1	2	3	4	5	55

PART IV

"Generation gap" is a term often used to imply a separation between two generations, such as between youth and their parents. Please circle the letter of one alternative in each of the following questions:

1. I feel that there is a generation gap between me personally and my parents:

   A. always
   B. often
   C. occasionally
   D. seldom
   E. never

2. I feel that there is a generation gap between my generation and my parents' generation:

   A. always
   B. often
   C. occasionally
   D. seldom
   E. never

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APPENDIX C

Varimax Rotated Factors

Varimax Rotated Factors

	Communalities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	0.568	0.422	0.513	0.271	-0.100	0.145	0.035	0.022	-0.144
2	0.653	0.024	-0.024	0.107	0.799	-0.042	0.015	0.006	0.002
3	0.658	-0.043	0.129	0.771	0.038	0.123	0.061	0.052	-0.148
4	0.565	0.404	0.273	0.439	0.036	0.176	-0.245	-0.112	0.173
5	0.501	0.480	0.168	0.361	-0.015	0.193	-0.155	0.183	-0.129
6	0.407	0.535	0.169	0.036	0.022	-0.033	0.083	-0.157	0.240
7	0.683	-0.063	0.162	0.761	0.043	0.104	0.128	0.099	-0.184
8	0.741	0.061	0.811	0.185	-0.007	0.108	-0.048	0.109	0.141
9	0.578	-0.046	0.159	0.164	0.124	-0.165	0.033	0.692	0.030
10	0.410	0.145	0.116	0.396	-0.096	-0.108	0.127	0.375	0.099
11	0.514	0.093	0.070	0.619	0.155	-0.006	0.101	0.265	0.111
12	0.479	0.427	-0.160	0.356	0.051	0.116	-0.118	0.263	0.211
13	0.534	0.673	0.084	-0.034	0.109	0.019	0.072	0.127	0.199
14	0.540	0.173	0.216	0.459	0.025	0.109	0.419	0.051	0.248
15	0.692	0.129	0.756	0.165	-0.040	0.116	0.130	0.141	0.161
16	0.502	0.139	0.001	-0.038	0.377	-0.514	-0.077	0.093	0.245
17	0.554	0.512	0.430	0.099	0.053	0.130	0.207	0.159	-0.100
18	0.528	0.154	0.124	0.001	0.096	0.063	0.045	-0.047	0.687
19	0.502	0.398	0.437	0.063	-0.149	0.274	0.103	0.200	-0.030
20	0.581	0.334	0.431	-0.183	0.122	-0.078	0.406	0.058	0.247

Varimax Rotated Factors (continued)

	Communalities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
21	0.602	0.100	0.043	-0.065	0.084	0.228	0.187	-0.020	0.701
22	0.559	0.040	0.307	0.096	-0.042	0.643	0.133	0.136	0.040
23	0.537	0.082	0.073	-0.030	0.531	-0.057	0.463	0.138	0.076
24	0.599	0.145	0.078	0.350	0.245	0.090	0.607	0.005	0.109
25	0.603	0.152	0.152	0.173	-0.021	0.690	-0.042	0.029	0.217
26	0.532	0.181	0.149	0.109	-0.212	0.214	0.382	0.464	-0.112
27	0.555	0.446	0.193	-0.038	-0.049	0.173	0.383	-0.111	0.355
28	0.561	0.361	0.302	0.200	-0.161	0.470	0.160	-0.108	0.128
29	0.640	0.230	0.690	0.094	-0.032	0.305	0.067	0.043	0.041
30	0.665	-0.033	-0.075	0.049	0.792	0.012	0.047	0.120	0.109
31	0.408	0.160	0.132	0.077	0.211	0.198	-0.089	0.515	0.048
32	0.564	0.165	0.096	-0.025	0.061	0.682	-0.145	0.105	0.162
33	0.575	0.109	-0.025	0.143	0.103	0.201	0.121	0.611	-0.322
34	0.531	0.616	0.097	-0.095	-0.003	0.082	0.221	0.275	0.038
35	0.573	0.101	0.023	0.131	0.328	-0.093	0.639	0.109	0.099
36	0.648	0.047	-0.054	0.037	0.697	-0.076	0.386	0.034	-0.010
37	0.568	0.501	0.308	0.154	0.121	0.273	0.328	-0.011	-0.041
	20.910	3.342	3.265	2.909	2.630	2.559	2.331	2.005	1.871
Percent of Common Variance	100.000	15.982	15.613	13.910	12.576	12.237	11.147	9.589	8.947
Percent of Total Variance	56.513	9.032	8.823	7.861	7.107	6.915	6.299	5.419	5.056